

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
MINUTES

Date: December 8, 2020
Time: 10:00am
Place: Via Zoom Meeting
Egremont

Present remotely via zoom meeting were Chairman George McGurn, Vice-Chair Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen, Board member Mary Brazie.

Others in attendance: Marj Wexler, Mary McGurn, Allison Marshese(CDCSB), Fred Gordan(Housing Committee), Barbara Kalish(Green Committee), Richard Stanley(CDCSB), Emily Eyre(Green Committee), Abigail Rogers-McKee(Historical Commission), Joan Goodkind(Housing Committee), Jeff Reynolds(RRG), Douglas Cooper, Mike Theiman(RRG).

It was announced that the meeting is video and audio recorded.

MINUTES:

The minutes of November 24 were accepted as edited.

NEW BUSINESS:

Barbara Kalish presented the Green Committee's plans to implement a Rain Barrel project in Egremont. Residents will purchase, through the Town, a rain barrel. Phase I will involve the sale of 16 barrels. Phase II will involve 32 barrels and purchasers can buy direct from the vendor. A funding mechanism for revolving funds must be established by Town Meeting first. The Board voted unanimously to approve the program pending an appropriate funding mechanism and secure storage area.

At 10:15am the Board called to order the Tax Classification hearing. Jeff Reynolds of Regional Resource Group, presented for the Assessors. The tentative tax rate will go down to \$9.35 from \$9.47 pending Department of Revenue approval. There is a 5.5% increase in values overall. The average tax bill will increase by about \$163. The town has \$348,181 in excess levy capacity. The Assessors recommend a single tax rate. The Board voted unanimously in accordance with M.G.L., Ch. 40, Sec. 56, as amended, the percentage of local tax levy which will be borne by each class of real and personal property, relative to setting the Fiscal Year 2021 tax rates and set the Residential Factor at 1.0, with a corresponding CIP shift of 1.0, pending approval of the town's annual tax recap by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. The Tax Recap forms will be submitted on December 9. Hearing adjourned at 10:30am.

The Board conducted a short interview with Douglas Cooper in response to his interest in joining the Historical Commission. Commission member Abigail Rogers-McKee said that Mr. Cooper would be an immense help with moving forward with the re-organization of the Archives room. The Board voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Cooper to the Commission.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the liquor renewal affidavits for the following Egremont restaurants: Egremont Village Inn, MT Bottles, Glencross, Inc., North Egremont Country Store, Boston Culinary Group, Alper Restaurants. Dan Smith Inc..

Allison Marshese, Executive Director of the Community Development Corporation of South

Berkshire, and Richard Stanley, presented the CDCSB's letter of intent to propose an affordable housing project for the land near town hall. CDCSB asked for 3 months, to March 15, 2021, to prepare a proposal. The Board voted unanimously to accept the letter of intent and agreed that the Housing Committee will not issue a request for proposals for the site until at least after March 15.

The Board agreed, with Selectboard member Brazie recusing, to grant the employees Thursday, December 24 as the second Christmas holiday date.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Board finalized plans for the All-boards meeting later in the day. An alphabetized list of all town departments has been updated with names of those who plan to speak.

After listening to Juliette Haas explain that as town's all collect different things it was hard to determine a true comparative for fees at the Transfer Station, the Board voted to increase the fees as proposed effective January 1, 2021.

COVID-19:

Covid Compliance Officer Jayne Smith is on the job.

The Commonwealth is setting up free, asymptomatic testing sites. A vaccine is nearing distribution.

FOLLOW UPS:

Juliette Haas reported that she has spoken with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) to be the facilitator for the Municipal Vulnerability Program. It has to be a certified provider, though there are others BRPC was recommended. She was asked to please keep the working group informed and to check out all options. The program does not release until April 2021 so there is plenty of time.

Mary McGurn reported that the Town Hall Beautification Work Group would like to report to the Board on December 22. This will be put on the agenda for that meeting.

The Treasurer recently rolled over the borrowing note for the Mount Washington Road engineering at an interest rate of .60%.

Vice-Chair Vermeulen reported that there has been no decision on the grant awards for the transportation vans. Hopefully before the end of the year.

The School Consolidation Planning Board has formed another subcommittee.

Again it is felt that the signing of the Broadband agreement is imminent. The current issues are easily surmountable.

SELECTBOARD ITEMS:

The Board will meet on December 22 at 10am via zoom.

Vice-Chair Vemeulen asked about the planning for a winter Town Meeting. The Board is waiting on the Planning Board to announce it has a Recreational Marijuana Bylaw is ready for action. The Town Clerk is looking at leasing/borrowing clickers for voting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:21am.

Mary Brazie,
Office Administrator

minutes.21/dec8

The recording of the minutes is on record at the Town Hall for 90 days. Anyone who wishes to may obtain a copy or listen to the recording at Town Hall. Attachments are on file at Town Hall.